1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 195
SR8 Bsh Negroes 588
Sarmacca

might catch fire were a wind to come up whn the underbrush is burned. If he spies a slender bent liana from which the Kromanti "Congo-bush" sticks are mad, then he has to be sure to cut it down with the proper ivocation, so that the spirit inside the liana will not bed him to its own shape.

Kasanya continued his explanation. "When a field is found, it is the man who clears it." A ma calls on his relatives or friends to help him. The men come with their machetes, and they cut away at bushes an shrubs, they cut away the lianas which are twined about the trees, and then the trees themselves. Then they goaway, leaving what they have cut to dry. "To take all tis away would be too hard, and, besides, fire does the wrk better, and fertilizes the ground as well."

So, when the wood is dry, they come wh fire, and let the fire finish the work. Then the ashes ar allowed to lie for a time, for, though this clearing is donduring the dry season, occasional showers can be relied upn to work the ash into the ground. Then, too, the timefor planting is not yet.

"Many things we plant a little before thold year meets the new," the old woman said.

"When it is time to break the ground,'Kasanya went on, "the man and the woman work togethe It is then that the woman begins her work in this field. What was done before had to do with cutting timber, ad our proverb says: Woodworking is not a woman's affir."

The man alone clears the ground, but the oman helps him break the earth.

"Breaking the ground is not easy," the old woman again interrupted. The matted roots have to be dug up with an iron hoe, for the Bush Negro works as his ancestors did hundreds of years ago in Africa. He has no plough, no beast of burden to help him in the fields.

When all this is done, then it is time to see to the consecration of the earth to its fertile uses. Rituals vary with each clan, and often from village to village of the same clan.

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

which went on, so that she might recount it to her father. The women of the village walked "softly" with this older daughter. "Daughter of the G'aman," they called her when they addressed her, and her mildly spoken, persuasive suggestions were never ignored.

Wilhelmina, however, busied herself at her work, and if anything were asked of her, she would look up with an expression of bewilderment. Differing from other women of the village, who had come to live there after marriage and knew the speech of the less aristocratic down-river settlements, Wilhelmina had never been any distance from Asindopo Lantiwe. The other women were, therefore, constantly interpreting the questions which were being put to her.

She was dark of skin, as dark as her sister, but her face had a flush of red in it, as though she had brushed it with the sacred red kuswe. A little above her wrists gleamed wide bands of tin. These were bracelets her husband had made for her, and they were much prized. The brass coils which she once wore had been filed through and removed, for when the ankles of a woman who bore children swelled, it became necessary to be rid of these ornaments.

In a small mortar, decorated with carvings, she was pounding maripa nuts. The ends of the pestle were bordered with finely cut cross hatchings.

"Ai, we use much palm oil here," she said.

Her mother was paring cassava. At her feet were several baskets and pieces of bark, shaped like miniature canoes, into which she threw the peeled cassava. Near these containers lay a sifter, woven of palm fiber, and a grater, made of a thin board perhaps sixteen inches long and half as wide, into which long slender nails had been hammered and their points filed to a needle-like sharpness. When the tubers were peeled, Wilhelmina began the grating, first squatting down, then dropping to her knees, better to work. The grated cassava was then packed into the matapi, the cassava press which had before leaned against the house. This matapi was of a basket-like weave, golden in color

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

And Fenekonde said, "Mourning is hard. The widow must not go to the river alone to wash. Other women must take her there. Her husband's spirit might seize her. Her hair must be cut. If not, he will get her by the hair. Her clothes must be ugly. She must keep herself unclean, so that his ghost will not long for her when he sees her."

But mourning was difficult not only for a woman. A man's mourning period was no less burdensome, they added. He too wore old clothes. When he went to wash, his wife's brother took him to the river. If he had another wife, he did not go into the hammock with her, for the dead woman would be envious and would kill him.

There were times, however, when women did not go into mourning for their husbands. If a woman carried a child in her womb, then she did not put on mourning clothes at all. She did not weep, she was not allowed to show any grief. That same night the dead man's oldest living brother would come with her in the hammock. If there were no brother, another man would come, for some man had to come.

"He must come. It cannot be otherwise. She cannot go to her hammock alone. So it is every night when a woman carries a child in her womb. A man must be with her, for the sake of the child."

3

In the clearing the widow stood stamping rice. About her the rice hulls flew and made a half circle of gold at her dark feet. Her mortar, which was made of a hollowed-out log, like a drum, was large and reached almost to her hips. On the ground was a large tray which she used for winnowing the rice. With slow, regular beats she lifted and dropped the pestle, and as her body swung with its slow motion the head of the sleeping child on her back rolled this way and that.

Her two small boys had gone to live in her mother's village, but this girl child remained with her. She was born

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

"Before she begs the gods, she is seated on a mat, or on cloths. Over her head a white cloth is thrown. The woman who is there to look after the coming of the child takes a calabash with water. Then she throws the water on the ground where the woman is seated. She begs the great gods, and the ancestors, and the woman's soul, and the woman's gods.

"When the pains come, she ties a cloth about her belly tight, tight, until it hurts. The woman who helps her gives her some water if she wants it, and she presses down on the belly and makes the cloth tighter and tighter, until the child comes. The cord is cut with a knife."

The knife was the same as the kind they used for cicatrizing, and the after-birth was buried behind the house, in a small hole into which food and a piece of the sacred sangrafu wood was thrown.

"The child is washed, and then *pemba*—kaolin—is put on its forehead, and after that the mother and the child bathe every day and then wash in pemba. Sometimes a moon comes and wanes, and another comes, and the mother still puts the white on herself and on her child."

But if the birth proved to be difficult, then the husband was told, and he besought his own ancestors and his own gods to help his woman and child.

"If the child doesn't come, then it's a bad spirit. Then they call the obia man."

When a woman had difficulty, everybody was troubled about it. If a woman had been unfaithful to her husband and had not confessed it, it would be that which would be killing the child in her womb, and killing her as well. Sometimes it was *wisi*—black magic—and everybody wondered who had sent it to their village. Sometimes it was a god who was envious.

"If it is a god, then, when the woman is strong again, she goes to a more powerful god and buys from him the next child to come into her womb. The strong god sees to it that the jealous one finds no way to harm the child."

What happened when a child was born dead?

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1929-1929) 1934
323 Bush Negroes 323
Saramacca

of the mortar in which she had been pounding maripa nuts was the Granman's younger wife. The pestle had fallen from her shaking fingers. She gave the intruders no attention, for she, too, was possessed by her god,—by Toné, god of the river.

"*Ko-ko-ko-ko-ko-ko! Ko-ko-ko-ko-ko-ko!*" The syllables fell from her and, as the white people stood by, her shaking stopped, the sounds did not go on. Then they began again, her body racked, her voice choked. The Toné people do not speak when they are possessed, it is through sounds such as these that the god of the river makes known his wishes.

Women came running toward us. "Your boat is ready, Bak'a," they said.

The whites returned with the bracelets to find that the two women to whom they brought their offerings had come as far as the Granman's quarter of the village. Afi's greeting of "Ondyi!" had died down to a whisper. Disconsolately she followed Amasina, who, in the white cloth which reached almost to her ankles, looked tall and sinuous, and moved as though there were something in the still air to send her body curving to one side and to the other.

As the possessed women and those with them entered the quarter, the elder wife of Yankuso came toward Amasina with a large calabash of rice.

"All those who have the same god come with gifts. Amasina has the strongest god of all. It is a white god," a woman explained.

White was the color for the ancestors, and hers was the god of a great priestess of the family. It was the god Towenu, the great Papa god, the giver of children, the jealous one, who came to her. If he cared for his priestess too well, he allowed her no children. The mention of his name the day before had brought him, and, coming, he vouched for the friendliness of the strangers.

Amasina put her arms about the older woman as she had done to the others who came to her. She sang once more her message:

Li Hanlaovita & Hanlaovita E-6 (1939-1950) 1934
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Carvings the women were eager to have claimed: owls, chicken heads, soup.

[Facing P. 239]

REBEL DESTINY

Sedefo might greet his sister. It was almost a half-day's travel, going up river, from Asindopo Lantiwe, yet it was not quite noon, and we were passing it. Here was Hei Kunuwa, its steep slopes already swinging into sight as we rounded a bend of the river and came through the small rapids above the settlement, and still it seemed as though we had but begun our course down toward our base camp and the railhead. And it was still early in the afternoon when we came to Ma'lobbi.

2

At the landing place, women were about. Much of the work of the Bush Negro woman is at the river's edge, and for strangers like ourselves, passing in a dugout, the presence of women working on the bank was the only sign that here was a landing place, and that farther inland lay a village. To the river they came with their carved clothes beaters, like the one we could see in the hand of the woman who greeted us here at Ma'lobbi, fashioned, as we later learned when she sold it to us, in the shape of a male vodu head on one end, and a female snake on the other. It was at the edge of the water that a woman scraped cooking pots and calabash dishes with sand, and it was here, till it seemed a good day for fishing, that a woman would go wading in the water to rest a cooking pot on the river bottom, and stand silently until an inquisitive school of small fish swam into it when, with a quick jerk, she would bring it up to take out what fish there were. This, aside from the use of small hooks, was the only kind of fishing a woman could do, for the fishing traps were for the use of men. But the cooking pot brought in many small fish to add flavor to a dish of rice.

As we walked into the village, accompanied by one of our younger paddlers, the bassia greeted us. The head of the village was waiting for us, he told us. Paddlers of small boats on their way downstream had spread the word that our visit with the Granman was drawing to an end.

As we walked toward the chief's house we looked about us, seeing again the evidence that here at Ma'lobbi there were men who knew how to carve wood, seeing why it was that our paddlers had spoken of it as a place for fine work.

"Ai, at Ma'lobbi they are good carvers."

Here was a house with its doorposts elaborately carved; there a beautifully worked rice tray, lying where it had been left by the woman who owned it, until she should need it later in the day for winnowing her rice; farther along a great bench stood, with the designs cut through in a fluid progression over top and sides.

The captain was in the lower portion of his two-story house when we entered. Several of the older men, who had been present at our earlier visit and who remembered our gifts of tobacco, came to join us, as the news of our arrival spread through the village. Soon the women were standing about, motioning to the white woman to come with them.

The house in which the captain received us was larger and more imposing than the others in the village. It was his *gado-ouve*—his treasure house. Its lower portion, where we sat in conversation with him, was where he worked. Above, where none of his wives might enter, his wealth was stored. Here he kept the pieces he had carved, and from here drew from time to time the presents he gave his wives. Here lay the wealth which his nephews would inherit when he died. But below, in the partially open shelter, was his workshop where he fashioned rough logs into stools and paddles, combs and food stirrers, trays and canoe seats, and all manner of objects which he and his women used in their daily routine.

All about the walls hung tools. There were machetes, whose sharp blades showed a reflection of fire from the sun which *danced on the wall. We had never seen so many of* these bush knives on display, nor, for that matter, such an array of tools anywhere on this river. From projecting boards or nails driven into posts hung several compasses, their hinged arms sharp-pointed, so that the craftsman might describe the perfect circles on the wood he carved.

Herskovits & Herskovits R-6 (1928-1929) 1934
[illegible] Bush Negroes [illegible]
Saramacca

This they had learned from the whites long ago, and now everywhere on the river compasses were seen, or carvings which showed their use. The machete, the small sharp knives which lay about here on the work-table, the compass, and sand made up any Bush Negro carver's tools. But here at Ma'lobbi in this workshop of the captain were tools from the white man's city, collected by himself on his journeys down to the government office to receive his yearly allowance, or by his men who had been to the French shore and learned of the ways of the outside world. There was a plane to make the blade of a paddle smooth as the skin of a child, and there were two others in addition to this one, we were assured, in the treasure house of the upper story. Hammers, too, were useful for making boats, and even for smaller carvings like benches. There was also a bit and auger, though we were never convinced that the captain himself had ever put it to its more prosaic uses.

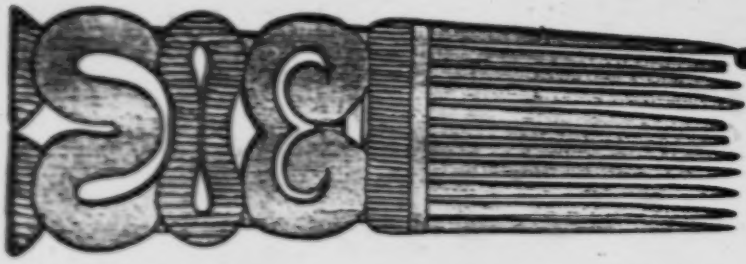
"I have many more up there," said the captain, pointing to the upper story. "I like them. If a man likes his tools, then they help him in his carvings. As he sees with his eyes, so they cut. I have always liked my tools, white man. I have spent much time with them."

A young man sat to one side shaving down a block of wood with a knife which he held.

"He is not carving," the captain said, following our eyes. "He is making a piece for this," he explained, indicating a plane. "Now is not the time for carving. There is too much to be done. This is the time for cutting wood, for taking the rafts down the river, for making boats, for bleeding rubber trees for the white man, and for hunting game. When the great rains come, then men sit about and carve."

As he spoke our eyes traveled to the various carvings which stood about the workshop. In one corner leaned a paddle which caught our attention because of its darkened color, and the patina which long use had given it, so that it seemed made of ebony. Against another wall were several stools, all richly ornamented with carvings, while beside us,

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8



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Chapter One

THE BLACK REBELLION

A GUINEA SLAVER, tacking up to Paramaribo. In the hold lay shackled Negroes, their bare bodies glistening with sweat. "Black Ivory" they were called. 448 175

Entrapped savages from the West Coast, transported nearly three thousand miles in slaving ships to the Dutch settlement in South America. Three months at sea, and they looked like leather-covered skeletons, those who were still alive.

Packed in a small space, without enough room to lie down, the slaves were forced to take turns at stretching out on the deck to sleep. The others squatted close together, straddling the ones lying down. The night air being considered pernicious, the portholes were closed when evening came, leaving the blacks to suffocate during the fetid dark hours. Sometimes the bare planks, combined with the rolling motion of the ship, rubbed off skin and flesh, leaving patches of bone exposed. Blood and filth were strewn about in an indescrib-

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1 [For caption, see category 116, p. 204. -- Analyst]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

Chapter Four

THE DANCE

SUNDOWN on the Surinam. Women with breasts like dried tobacco leaves stew hunks of red baboon over the Djuka fires. The old dance gods will stir tonight. Mist is drifting up from the river and blowing between the trees. Colours fade out as darkness falls. The atmosphere of the jungle closes in on us with the night.

As night falls a Bush Negro corial appears on the river. It is followed by four others, all loaded with people from another village three miles downstream. The strangers have come to dance for the bahkra. We have promised them candy and high wine. The women tie bands of nuts about their limbs; the dried nuts rattle.

They bring the drums, the soul of the jungle. The big tom-tom, elaborately carved on the outside, is the *apenti*, or signal drum. The smaller *nanda* and the baby *baboula* (an African

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2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

Chapter Five

THE GAME TRAIL

ON the rivers we frequently encounter Djukas going downstream to Paramaribo or Albina on lumber rafts. The big logs are fastened together with lianas, twined about stakes driven into holes, and lashed to stout cross-pieces. Three paddlers stand upright on this raft and take it down the river like a canoe.

The lumber is arduously cut, the great trees being felled and chopped square with axes. A tree cut in the jungle will not fall to earth; the surrounding growth holds it upright. Therefore, days are spent in clearing a space of ground where the tree may come down. The vines and lianas must be cut away, and the vast buttressing roots severed. The tree is brought down in this clearing, hewn of its branches, and dragged into the water. Hardwood is too heavy to float, so

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

84/ 313 Behind each village, a quarter of a mile to five miles distant, are its provision grounds, which the women work. They consist of tiny patches of half an acre or more, carved out of the heart of the jungle by means of terrific labour. It [312] takes the men weeks of work with axes and bush-knives to clear the ground. The fallen trees, some of extremely hard wood, are cut up, burnt, or carried away. The brush is cleared with a machete, or bush-knife, which Negroes call a neefee; they swing this blade with amazing force by making the wrist the centre of its arc.

84/ 291 The women, as in most primitive societies, tend to the planting and harvesting of the crops. They are helped by the men of the family on some occasions, such as when the harvest is threatened by voracious parasites. The arduous labour of cultivating the stubborn earth comes so naturally to a Bush Negro woman that she is incredulous when told that elsewhere the males alone till the soil.

84/ 291 A leaf-cutting ant, *Ecodoma cephalotes*, that carries small bits of leaves into its nest, preys on the cassava fields. These ants march in two parallel columns, one going to the fields and the other returning, and systematically ruin the crop. The bit of green that each ant is carrying off looks like an umbrella; hence they are called umbrella ants. They live on a fungus which they grow on the cut leaves. Large numbers of them working together can denude an entire cassava field in a comparatively short time.

84/ 291 The jungle ground is not excessively fertile, for the incessant downpours leach out the humus, and there is not

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Arcanes

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Flat and Spoon of Carved Calabash Gourd, Aucaner Tribe.
Kahn Design Collection, American Museum of Natural History

[Facing p. 88]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

Chapter Eight

MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

THE Bush Negro family is not a family in our sense of the word. In the Surinam jungle the Djuka family is polygamous and matrilineal. The unit of society is the hut, where the mother and her children live.

In order to understand the marriage customs of the Bush Negro tribes it is first necessary to forget for the time being the system of patriarchal family life under which the white men of our age live. One unconsciously takes the customs of one's own society as a norm, and passes moral judgment on exotic customs by their deviation from that norm. This habit of thinking must be avoided as far as possible in considering a primitive society, though it is difficult even for an agile mind to make dispassionately the transition from one culture in which the father is dominant, to another, in which his position is not important. On the other hand, many of our

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2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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Saramaccaner

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Combs and Pot Stirrers with Chains. Each is Carved from One Piece of Wood. Saramaccaner Tribe, Upper Suriname River.

Kahn-Granger Collection, American Museum of Natural History. Photo by Herbert Kahler

[Facing p. 120]

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramaccaner

Chapter Nine

MEDICINE AND MAGIC

NO one in Djuka land dies a natural death. Death is caused by witchcraft. At Santi Gron on the Saramacca River, preparations are being made for a burial. The whole village is excited. The women wailing are the relatives of the dead man. Children are crying because they see others crying. Unseen drums throb dully, making the hot air pulsate. The corpse lies in an open shed with only three walls—a death house (*dede oso*). Two girls of fifteen or sixteen are fanning it steadily to keep the flies away. The man died more than a week ago; all this time the body had been lying on a platform out in the tropical heat to decompose.

It is black magic that kills. Therefore the Bush Negroes make an effort to find out who made the magic that killed this man. An ancient ritual is employed. Three to ten days the corpse is left unburied, and in the humid heat the flesh undergoes a partial liquefaction. The putrescent fluid is gathered in a calabash cup and carried around from door to door.

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni

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A Bush Negro Woman of the Boni Tribe with a Carved Wooden Flail Used Instead of a Wringer, for Cloth. The right hand holds a tin containing an infusion of tobacco leaf and water.

[Facing p. 156]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Aucaner

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Bush Negro Man, "Amebkimmi" (Makes Nice Things), with a Carved and Inlaid Pot Stirrer Which He Has Just Completed for His Wife. *Aucaner Tribe*, Upper Carmontibo River, Dutch Guiana.

[facing p. 172]

2; Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

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Carved Wooden Hand for Marking Posts.
Kahn Collection, American Museum of Natural History

[Facing p. 176]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Surinam

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Carved Wooden Comb of the Bush Tribes, French Guiana. The carved cross is a symbol of a woman
surrounded by four phallic symbols in the form of carved arrows.
Kahn Design Collection, American Museum of Natural History

[Facing p. 184]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

Common household implements for everyday use had to be made out of different material. Wood was used wherever possible. So in place of iron the Bush Negroes developed an elaborate and beautiful art of carving domestic utensils. Pots are stirred with wooden paddles instead of with iron ladles. Enormous wooden trays are used for carrying food. Combs, stools, beaters, and a dozen other implements all bear evidence of this extraordinary technique of wood carving, and this too is a heritage from their African ancestry.

In tracing the relationship between any two cultures, such as the West African and the Bush Negro, we should always bear in mind the possibility that both developed independently and that similarities between them may be due to the influence of similar environments rather than to actual culture contact. Thus, for example, while the Djuka corial is hollowed out of solid logs in a fashion similar to the West African canoe, which at once suggests borrowing, it is also true that the rapid waters of the Surinam, Marowyne, and Saramacca Rivers make any other kind of board or bark canoe impracticable. The Bush Negroes' dugout canoes may be an independent adaptation to the environment rather than a heritage from Africa.

This difficulty is a common one in anthropological speculation; examples are to be found on all hands. Thus, it has been maintained that the Reindeer Men who lived in France during the Magdalenian Age are related to the present-day Eskimo, because their bone implements and crude drawings bear certain resemblances, although the two races are

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

The wooden combs used by the Bush Negroes are a most direct West African heritage, being found along the Upper Guinea coast, Ashanti, Cameroons, Ivory and Gold Coasts, Dahomey, Muni, and many other regions of Africa. The wooden plates and trays are likewise found among the Ewe-speaking tribes of the West Coast.

The custom of personal decoration by the cicatrization of the skin is very common throughout many parts of Africa. Captain John Stedman remarks on this strange habit in his *Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition to Surinam:* "The Loango Negroes distinguish themselves by puncturing or marking the skin of their sides, arms, and thighs with square, elevated figures something like dice." This custom was widespread on the Slave Coast. The scar designs varied widely according to the different tribes as well as the social position and wealth of the individual. As the Indians of South America do not practise this cicatrization, it is evident that the Bush Negroes brought it over with them from their former home.

The Bush Negro coiffure, the method of arranging the hair in plaited tufts, is found also on the Gold Coast, in Cameroons, and elsewhere in Africa. The Djuka method of weaving is similar to that of the Sudan, Gold Coast, Mandingo, Ashanti, and the Ewe. The spindle used in weaving is called by an African term, *kyekye*, a Tshi word. The woven leg band, the *arpu*, is the same as the leg bands found in Cameroons and the Upper Guinea coast in general.

The method of finding out who is responsible for the

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
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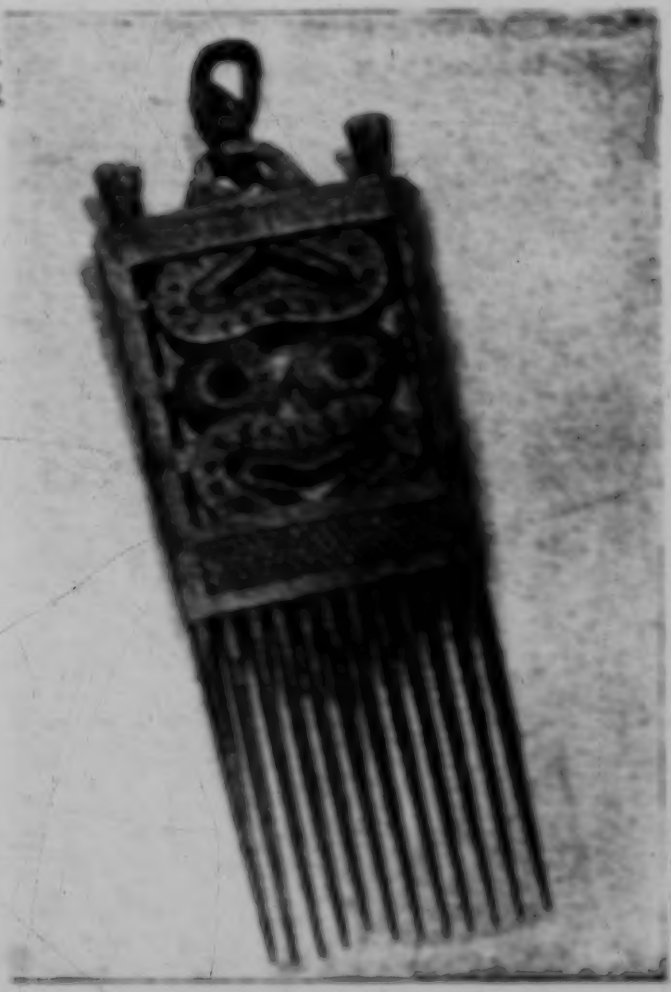
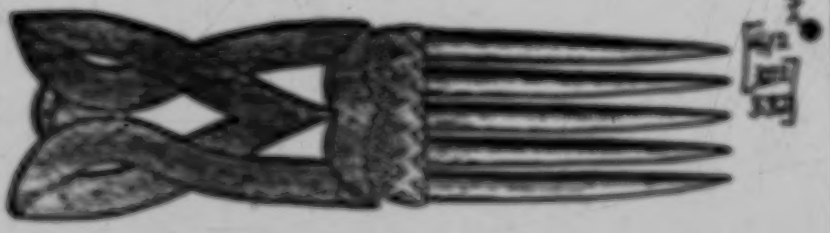


Carved Wooden Comb, Human Face Motif. Boni Tribe.
Kahn-Granger Collection, American Museum of Natural History

[Facing p. 198]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8



Chapter Twelve

PRIMITIVE ART

[317] THE sense of beauty is not absent in the jungle. The Djukas have definite æsthetic feelings and in their wood carving they have a well-developed and conventionalized art form. Art is highly socialized and universally appreciated among them. There are definite artistic conventions and common conventionalized forms.

Among ourselves the production of artistic objects is confined to a small group of especially gifted individuals, whereas among the Bush Negroes it is a regular part in the life of proportionately many more individuals. Common objects of everyday use, which among ourselves are designed for utility alone, are developed by the Bush Negroes into elaborate objects of art. They represent one of the most characteristic features of any Bush Negro village. One is sure to find in every village the carved plates and long-toined combs and pierced decorations that constitute the art of the Bush Negroes.

[318]

[For caption, see category IIIa, p.204.—Analyst]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramaccaner

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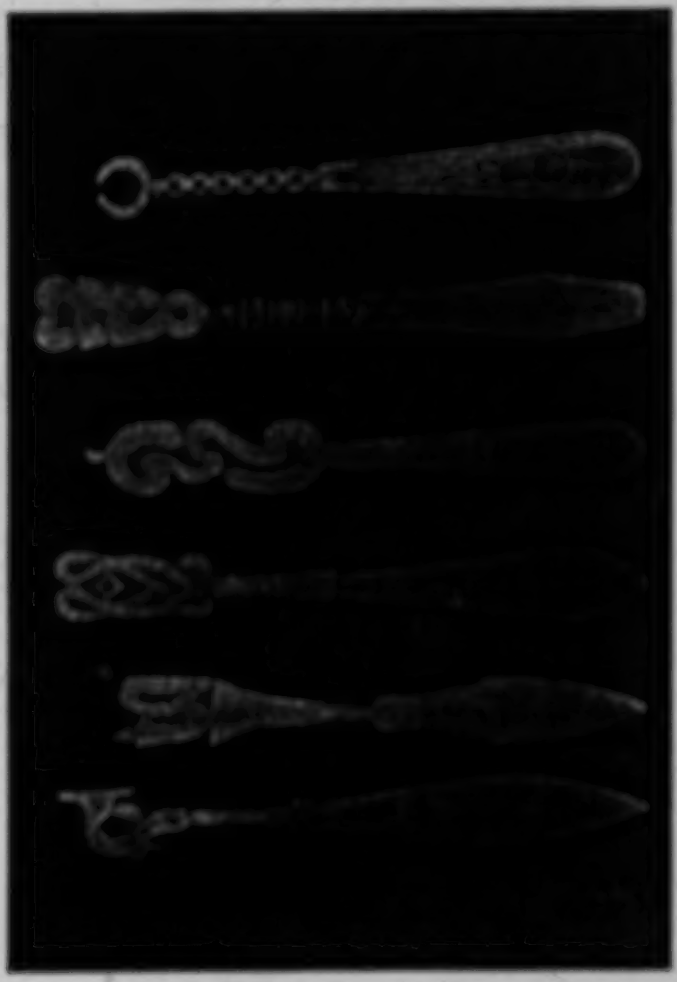

Pen Sticks, Saramaccaner Tribe.
Kahn Guiana Collection, American Museum of Natural History

[facing p. 194]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

532 one woman said: "He gave me this piece when we were
322 first married. I won't part with it now." Usually an elaborate
439 parley is necessary. The women are undecided whether to sell or not. They laugh, giggle, put their finger coyly in their mouths, joke bashfully with bystanders, and cannot make up their minds as to the price. They never know how much to ask for a piece. Sometimes they will mention a preposterous figure, hoping like a naïve child that the strange bahkra will pay that much. But on such occasions a rebuke will make them more reasonable. Once an arrogant witch doctor intervened in a transaction with a Bush Negro woman, demanding angrily that she receive an exorbitant payment. His anger was squelched with a few sharp words, and, contrite, he sat up all night to carve an ornate implement to present to the bahkra as a peace-offering. Cunning Adjobo, the medicine man!

4/2 The Bush Negro implements are carved out of jungle
322 wood. Some are made of lignum vitæ, the hardest wood
[30] known. A few of them are made of soft wood, light and spongy, but these are not popular. The small paddles are used for stirring in the cooking pots, and the combs are
[30] actually used for the hair. They are never worn as personal ornaments, and when not in use are hung up on the walls of the hut. The utensils are all made with common trade
[77] jackknives and compasses which are used as dividers. It is principally with these dividers that the serpentine motifs
322 are executed. After the carving is finished the piece is smoothed off by rubbing it with matted grass and river

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramaccaner

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532

Pot Stirrers and Canoe Paddle Handle.
Saramaccaner Tribe.

[Facing p. 196 (A)]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni
Ancomer
912
532

Clothes Beater and Food Paddle. *Boni Tribe.*

Ceremonial Sword and Pot Stirrer. *Ancomer Tribe.*

[Facing p. 196 (I)]

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Aucaner

#12
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Pot Stirrers. Stylized human figure and snake motifs.
Aucaner Tribe.

[Facing p. 196 (c)]

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

sand. A few chisels and carpenter's tools can occasionally be found. Where compasses or dividers cannot be obtained, a nail and piece of string are often used to execute the involved serpentine patterns.

Bush Negro sand is not used for trading purposes. A few pieces find their way down to the coast, of course, but they are never articles of commerce among the Djukas. In some villages, and particularly among the Paramacca tribe, it is practically impossible to obtain many carvings. But the willingness to part with these objects naturally varies with the village and the individual. Being known to the natives greatly facilitates trade.

One outstanding feature of this work is the complete absence of colour. The finished piece shows the natural hue of the wood, and rarely anything more. An occasional variation is obtained by inlaying with racuda wood, brownheart, or purpleheart, but tints and dyes are seldom applied. A different shade is also obtained once in a while by branding or burning the wood with a hot iron. The Aucaners, who paint red and black devices on their large canoe paddles, represent exceptions to the general rule of showing only the natural wood shades.

Nearly all the pieces are utilitarian in origin and purpose, but some of them are so highly carved as to be of little practical use. These are much prized as gift pieces. The trays are actually used to carry food on, and also for winnowing rice. The stirring paddles dip into the food pot every evening. After being used they are washed with river water and hung up on a peg.

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Aucaner

412
SR

Pot Stirrer and Hair Combs. The comb in the centre is three feet long. *Aucaner Tribe.*

[Facing p. 197]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

412 [801] hung up on a peg. The canoe paddles are actually employed every day on the river, and the flails beat the day's wash of soiled togas and capas.

352 [795] Since it is taboo to sit on the ground, a large number of stools are made, pierced and decorated, with now and then a tiny cabinet inside them. Wooden locks that actually work [1+] are seen on the doors, especially in Ataoaner villages, guarding the treasures inside. These are West African survivals; the same type of device can be found in several parts of the Old Continent. They are huge affairs often two feet in length. Door sills and door posts, bows and sterns of canoes, 532 canoe seats and calabash gourds (occasionally decorated by a woman) are all embellished with ornamentation of great intricacy. It is amazing that these designs could be wrought without preliminary designing, which would seem to be necessary, but so far as we were able to observe there is no conscious planning before the carving begins.

The symbolism employed in these pieces of saasi is limited to a few conventionalized motifs. Moreover, there is a variation in the symbolism peculiar to the individual artist, which is not comprehensible solely from an examination of the piece itself. Unless one can locate the original carver, it is impossible, for the most part, to be certain what the symbols mean. The same motif will be differently interpreted by different natives, and often has no objective meaning. It is therefore impossible to undertake an elaborate interpretation of Djuka symbolism.

There are a few outstanding designs found on a large

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

Pot Stirrer and Hair Comb.
Saramaccaner Tribe.

Pot Stirrer.
Aucaner Tribe.

[Facing p. 198]

532 likewise roughly done. The reason for this seems to derive
778 from the general nature of primitive religion as it occurs among the Bush Negroes. Two explanations of this were given by native informants. If the god is a good god, and well disposed toward the black man, he doesn't care whether his fetishes are well executed or not. If he is a bad god he is going to continue to be bad, regardless of whether much time is spent on his fetishes or not. Another Bush Negro, questioned about this, said: "Me no sabby de Gadu luku"—"I don't know what God looks like." The primitive aesthetic feeling, apparently, is bound up with practical ends. There is absolutely no care or pains taken with religious objects, whereas erotic objects are finished with great skill.

222 There seems to be considerable variation between the tribes
189 of Djukas in the character of their art work. The Aucaner
532 wood carvings have, in general, a more refined and delicate cast than the wood carvings of their neighbours, the Saramaccaners and Boni. The differences in treatment of the motifs among the Bush Negro tribes and the general dissimilarities and likenesses of the carvings are best understood by consulting the accompanying illustrations.

● 442 The combs vary from two and a half inches to twenty-
322 four inches in length, and even these more immense combs see actual service. They are always made of a single piece, including the tines. For the most part they are made of harder woods, with occasional inlays. A number of them are trick pieces, with little ingenious devices that catch and hold the imagination of the primitive. For comparison, a West

2:Kaha D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

African comb, from the region of Nigeria, is shown on page 175. It can be seen that the wooden comb is not a Djuka invention, as every characteristic of the Bush Negro pieces can be found on this West African piece, except the ornamental piercing.

The arts of weaving and basketry are not as highly developed among the Djukas as is the carving of wooden implements. The Bush Negroes do not weave the cotton cloth they wear. It is obtained, instead, by trading at the white settlements. The only weaving among them consists of cotton leg and arm bands—things that do not count for much so far as industry is concerned, but which expand the wearer's ego and add enormously to his or her self-esteem. The basketry of the Djukas, like the weaving, is simple and competent. Unornamented circular baskets, varying in size from a foot to a yard in diameter, can be seen in all the villages. They are used for carrying yams, rice, and foodstuffs generally. The finest basket work does not occur in these baskets, however, but in the cassava squeezers, those elongated tubes for producing cassava flour. These are beautifully woven of uniform rattan, and decorated with darker strips to form a simple pattern near each end. The finished product is an admirable piece of work, of which the owner must indeed be proud.

Pottery is made by the Djukas for utilitarian purposes only, and the solid black, absolutely undecorated clay ware has no particular element of beauty. The pots are black, stolid, and unimaginative. They are simply necessities.

But when the necessities of life have been provided for,

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

and leisure is at hand for more beautiful and tender endeavours, the Bush Negro, seated before his evening fire, sharpens his knife and begins marking, with fine, deft lines, the graceful outlines of another paddle or comb to please his woman.

List of Carvings Shown at Chapter Openings
with Explanations of Symbolism

Carved Bench Top, *Saramaccaner Tribe*: Eight Women Dancing Around a Gaaba Pole (title page)

Carved Bench Top, *Boni Tribe*: Stylization of Male and Female Figures (page 3)

Hair Comb, *Aucaner Tribe* (page 7)

Carved Pierced Bench Top, *Saramaccaner Tribe*: Two Male Figures Each Holding a Snake Aloft (page 27)

Carved Bench Top, *Saramaccaner Tribe*: Two Highly Stylized Human Figures (page 39)

Hair Comb, *Aucaner Tribe*: Male and Female Snakes (page 53)

Carved Bench Top, *Boni Tribe*: Vulva Surrounded by Phallic Symbols (page 63)

Carved Inner Surface of Calabash Gourd, African Bone Motif, *Saramaccaner Tribe* (page 83)

Carved Bench Top, *Saramaccaner Tribe*: Frog Design Executed with Serpentine Technique (page 91)

Hair Comb, *Aucaner Tribe*: Vulva Motif; the triangles on the cross bar represent snake teeth (page 119)

Hair Comb, *Saramaccaner Tribe*: Male and Female Figures (page 133)

Carved Outer Surface of Calabash Gourd, *Saramaccaner Tribe* (page 161)

Comb from Nigeria, West Africa (page 175)

Hair Comb, *Saramaccaner Tribe* (page 193)

/10 cont./

574 The politeness shown toward a guest springs from the idea that unknowingly one of them might easily take the very piece that the important person wished to have, and although no comment would be made on this it could nonetheless happen that this would trouble the guest for whom they cherish special respect, 818 or that he would thereby consider himself insulted. It is particularly to old age that they pay great respect.

Chapter VI

Household and Agricultural Implements

412 [322] [424] [531] The Bush Negroes mainly use adzes in order to hew their corjalen or canoes out of trees partially burned out beforehand; furthermore, they use planes and chisels in order to work their (usually cedarwood) (1) stools and pawis or paddles (2). They are

1. Cedrela odorata L.

2. Hand oar.

especially fond of having these carved with many figures. For them the machete is an indispensable tool that they always carry around and use as a chopping knife, sword, and knife, indeed, even to cut splinters or thorns out of the foot with the tip. They use field axes or hatchets to cut down the bush in order to lay out their small cultivation grounds and to work the wood that they float by rafts and sell.

562 412 [324] [413] The women possess, aside from a machete or knife, also mattocks with which they keep their lands and the place near the dwelling neat; they make brooms from the pina palm raceme or from rice ears bound in sheaves. They like to have scissors, needles, and pins, while for knitting they use a pointed and bent nail.

413 [283] [286] They spin their sewing thread from cotton with a certain tool which they call kekè; they also have a round, wooden tool called sepoe, with which they very nicely and sturdily /11/ make

/11 cont./

252 They always prepare their food with much native pepper (5)

5. All Capsicum species.

and in their soup or blaf cook various forest greens (6), which they

6. Kranse, kalalve from the Amaranthus cimicosus, taja leaves from an Arum species.

then eat with finely pounded bananas (called afoefoe) or else with cassava bread or rice dipped into it.

412 They make their spoons from a long strip of the calebash rind.
262 They are great lovers of pinda (?), a kind of groundnut, from

7. Arachis hypogaea L.

which they make various delicacies.

[459] They are particularly fond of bacon and buy it whenever they are in town, salted and smoked; they frequently take barrels of it with them into the bush and are very sparing with it.

/12/ They buy flour or meal only when they have had a bad rice harvest.

273 As drink they use rum or dram, and sometimes they make
[439] from the juice of the sugar cane, which they acquire on plantations, a kind of fermented drink which they use especially at festivals. They prefer gin and beer to wine, of which they are no great lovers. The women are very fond of liqueur.

276 Many men and women smoke American tobacco in short clay pipes. The taking of snuff is a passionate habit among some.

Chapter VIII

Festivals, Games, Gods

79%
273 They do not have fixed times for the veneration of their gods, and they do this only then when they are amply supplied with strong drink and want to have a gay time for three or four days.

4. Gelpkm--18 G,N-5 (1952) 1954 SBS Suth Negroes SBS

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Fig. 9. Baking cassava bread on the iron baking plate (the "pan"). -- Tapanahoni, Driestabbetje, June 1952.

[142]
[291]
[412]

Fig. 10. Pounding the expressed pieces of cassava (in the pan in the foreground) to flour in a wooden mortar (the "matta") in order to bake bread with it. -- Marowijne, Albina, April 1952.

/5 cont./

825 wood is too hard to be worked with ordinary instruments or, on the
311 contrary, because it is too soft, too easily attacked by insects, or has a tendency to rot. The zone exploitable by native procedures is limited (for the flexible axes /I/ do not allow fine woods) to the slope of the hills bordering the valley of the watercourses accessible to pirogues; beyond, the carriage of felled trunks becomes impracticable.

132 132 A very dense epiphytic vegetation connects the trees with their upper parts; it is there that life blossoms out: flowers, birds, insects, and monkeys.

[illegible] [illegible] [132] [412] [133] Progress through the forest is very arduous. The undergrowth, shrubs, bushes, bound together by fine and elastic lianas, offers a constant obstacle, the machete /kabe/ must be wielded at each step. The nature of the terrain, a succession of bogs and hills with steep and slippery slopes, makes walking for heavily loaded men exhausting. On the trail one succeeds with difficulty in making more than 15 to 20 kilometers a day; in the uninhabited forest one can scarcely advance five to six kilometers a day by cutting the strict minimum as one does when hunting. The opening of a route permitting the passage of heavily laden men cannot progress more than three kilometers a day on the average.

139 182 The great forest offers few real dangers, but it is an environment profoundly hostile to man, which does not present spontaneously any food resource and allows establishment of villages and cultivated areas only at the price of great efforts.

136 One meets few animals in the interior of the forest, and the resources for hunting are very limited; on the other hand, there are few harmful animals; wild beasts are few and practically do not appear; snakes are much rarer than on the coast and represent
164 only a slight danger. The most real dangers of the forest come from the fall of branches and epiphytes, principally when it is cleared for cultivation; each year there are accidents of this kind in Boni country. Besides, work in the forest is the occasion for many wounds which tend to ulcerate.

Gilbert--267 K-3 (1948-1956 1961 Sub Region: 788
Suni

/163 cont. /

764 769 789 given any indication whatever. Besides, how would he have had time to make himself understood by two men walking at top speed, crushed by their heavy load and looking straight ahead?

This upsets all the ideas I had formed about this test. The only hypothesis that remains is that the bearers have been "tipped off" by the man who went to get them (an old man of the council). But is it possible that such a crude fraud could be current practice? The Suni are far from being stupid, they are ever suspicious /166/ and they are too talkative for such deceptions not to be laid bare by their perpetrators themselves.

Under these conditions, how can it operate--this collective suggestion which explains most of the rites of the Refugee Blacks? I can't explain it to myself.

764 769 322 [192] Manufacture of the Coffin. The kisimŋ are gathered around a pile of boards. They are about 15 in number, commanded by Boofo, head of the kisimŋ of Assi, and Atém (Assi-Dupélu II). A pile of boards is at their feet; some work with a small hand saw, others with an adze; the fitting is done with a machete. /Fig. 21 appears here./

They take measurements with a graver. The bottom board is cut first, then the front and back ends. The outline of the back end, in the shape of a truncated diamond, results from a rather complex construction with the compass which I have not time to report.

764 769 [152] [262] The work is done noisily in an atmosphere of crude farce. The whole time it lasts, the kisimŋ exert veritable command over the village. The coconut trees of Kuemotibo are pillaged for their benefit. The village women prepare the rice for the meal which must, according to custom, be offered to them upon finishing the coffin about noon.

/164 cont./

764 969 322 I see the head of the kisimã make ready the fitting of the lower lateral wings. Without nailing it, he places the back end on the bottom plank, giving it the proper inclination. They put

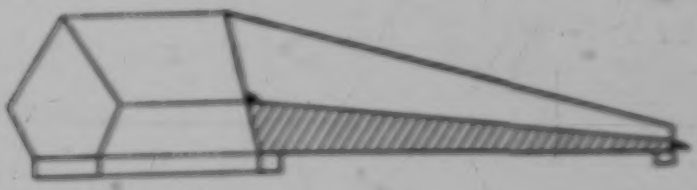

Fig. 21. A Boni coffin.

in place the board which is to serve as a wing. An elastic string smeared with soot is stretched between a_1 and a_2; they pinch it in the middle and in falling back it traces the line a_1a_2 on the wing.

(112) The cutting out of the wing is done with a saw and the fitting with the machete, then with a plane.

About 11 o'clock they begin to nail the wings. According to the rites, several kisimã accompany in cadence the noise of the hammer blows by hitting the coffin with pieces of wood. Why this ceremony? None of the kisimã can explain it. Perhaps it would be considered dangerous for one man to carry out alone one of the operations relating most directly to death.

764 While the kisimã work, Way's friends and relatives do not stop /165/ arriving; their boats jam the wharf. The people wend their way toward the mortuary shed, men on one side, women on the other. It is the women who bring pieces of cloth (including those given by their brothers and husbands); the men carry tafia in bottles.

Upon arriving the women sit down, cover their faces and lament a few minutes, then sit down with the others in front of the mortuary shed. On the other side of the shed the men are seated, immobile on their small benches. An elder busies himself